



Application

32156 - FY 2016 Arts Tour Minnesota

34776 - FY 2016 Arts Tour Minnesota

Arts Tour Minnesota

Status:

Submitted

Submitted Date:

07/17/2015 3:16 PM

Primary Contact

Legal Name*

Ward

Kimberly

Merrill

First Name

Middle Name

Last Name

Alternate Name

Ward

Merrill

First Name

Last Name

City

International Falls

Organization Information

Legal Name:

Citizens for Backus / Alexander Baker, Inc.

Alternate Name

Backus Community Center

City

International Falls

Project Outcomes

Applicant Information

Applicant Organization or Individual

Organization

Applicant or Project Classification

Arts Presenting Organization

Organizations only:

Total Annual Operating Expenses	\$532,533
Total Organizational Staff Full-time Equivalents (FTE)	4.65

—

Arts Access and Arts Learning applications only:

Arts Access and Arts Learning applications only:

Contact Hours	0
---------------	---

—

Public Statement

*If the application is funded, the **public statement** will be posted on the Arts Board Web site and other locations. Write in a factual manner, in the third person, using complete sentences. Example: ABC Organization will collaborate with playwright and actor Jane Doe to create and perform ArtWork, a one woman play that uses poetry to explore social justice issues.*

Public Statement (225 characters max)

Backus Community Center, International Falls, will present four touring shows (one-man, big band, ballet and Celtic); all professionals will meet students, the public and citizen artists through workshops and outreach events.

—

Outcomes

An outcome statement describes change in knowledge, attitude, skill, behavior, or condition among the people a project is designed to benefit. Refer to Help for information about how to craft effective outcomes.

*State at least one measurable **project** outcome that the applicant intends to achieve. A second outcome is optional.*

Applicant Project Outcome (150 characters max).

To increase the size of the Backus audience through outreach to youth and families.

State the methods(s) the applicant will use to evaluate progress toward each outcome.

How will the applicant project outcome be evaluated (200 characters max)?

Quantitative: compare season attendance with baseline data. Qualitative: video and written observation of moderated after-concert & outreach interaction with artists to gauge potential audience growth.

*For each applicant **project** outcome, select an Arts Board **program** outcome that the project will achieve. More than one applicant project outcome can support the same Arts Board program outcome.*

Arts Board Program Outcome

More Minnesotans have access to high quality arts opportunities regardless of geographic location.

—

Applicant Project Outcome (150 characters max).

How will the applicant project outcome be evaluated (200 characters max)?

Narrative

—

Applicant Background and Project Description

Applicant Background (1875 characters max)

Provide information as requested in this program's link in the instructions section.

Mission: *"Historic Backus Community Center, in the heart of International Falls, where all generations celebrate arts, culture, recreation, wellness and life-long learning."* Citizens for Backus/AB (Alexander Baker) is a non-profit corporation formed in 2002 to save two historic school buildings from destruction and provide a permanent venue for the arts. Current goals call for increasing and diversifying our audience by reaching out to families and youth.

Regular arts programs include afterschool/summer art programs and Prairie Fire Children's Theatre. The center hosts annual school band and vocal music festivals. Backus also supports a growing community theatre company of youth and adults known as The Borealis Bards. 2015-16 will mark the third season of a Performing Arts Series bringing five quality arts programs to the Backus stage.

Communities served include every age group in International Falls and Koochiching County. Since 2010 the center has brought visiting artists to all county schools impacting over 1,000 Pre-K through 12th grade students each year. The center is buzzing with citizens of all ages participating in live performances, youth & adult art classes, open gyms, community theatre, youth sports, 4-H, band, orchestra & dance. Two free meal programs have served over 50,000 meals to children and adults since 2010. Complimentary tickets, updated accessible seating and ASL interpreters enable many impaired or disadvantaged citizens to attend events.

Presenting Experience: Since 2002 the center has presented over 250 concerts, plays, musicals or talent shows and served as the venue for 70 years of Border Concert Association concerts. Two MSAB Tour grants in 2013 & 2014 enabled Backus to begin an annual performing arts series including Monroe Crossing, Ragamala Dance, Billy McLaughlin, Rose Ensemble, Tonic Sol-fa and MPR's Walking Shoes Tour. Since 2013 board/staff have toured 16 theaters and auditoriums to learn more about presenting, technology & promoting. A new stage-lighting system is partially competed and planning is underway for a permanent sound system.

Project Description (1875 characters max)

Provide information as requested in this program's link in the instructions section.

Backus will present four touring artists as part of a 5-part 2016-17 Performing Arts Series including Ring of Kerry, Shaun Johnson Big Band Experience, James Sewell Ballet & *Hard Travelin' w/ Woody*. The 5th presentation in the series will be the musical *The Addams Family* by our local theatre group Borealis Bards and is not funded through this grant.

All artists, will engage in a variety of arts outreach while in our community including master classes, workshops, nursing home concerts & school programs

Partners include Int'l. Falls, Indus & Littlefork schools, Darcie's Dance Studio, Borealis Bards, Rainy River Community College & Good Samaritan Center. All partners share a common goal of supporting the quality of life for youth, residents & citizens of all ages through citizen engagement in quality arts opportunities.

Due to the area's extreme isolation, high unemployment & poor economy, opportunities to experience quality arts opportunities are limited. The project provides an underserved population of youth and adults with quality arts programs in one of the state's most remote regions with a focus on the MSAB program outcome of "More Minnesotans have access to high quality arts opportunities regardless of geographic location."

—

Review Criteria

1. The Quality of the Arts Experience (3750 characters max)

Without a doubt, this lineup will be of the highest quality yet to be presented at Backus. An Emmy-award winner, a New York-based artist with a timely message, a Celtic group as requested through audience surveys and a return of a most popular artist from previous seasons combine for entertainment that is stylish and thought-provoking.

1. Artist qualifications: Shaun Johnson of Big Band Experience is an award-winning singer/songwriter; has sold 2 million albums; been featured in major media including a PBS TV special. His touring band has only the best instrumentalists and arrangers, also well-known in their fields. James Sewell Ballet, once a NY-based company now reaches out of Minneapolis to rural audiences to expand the public understanding of ballet. His MN collaborations are with the highest quality organizations including Children's Theatre and MN Orchestra. Ring of Kerry, a runner-up for a McKnight Fellowship Award, will meet our audience's demand for powerhouse Celtic band, drawing connections between the Old World and New to bring all ages to a better understanding of cultures and dance. Hard Travelin' With Woody, critically acclaimed in NY(2011) and since touring the US and abroad, has the most critical accolades of all our performers. Reviews say "topicality and urgency", "restores Guthrie's sting" and "astonishing review of labor history" will speak to our audience.

(2) Impact on communities: The artists were chosen for variety, based on word of mouth from others and to meet requests of those surveyed. Impact will be broadening of knowledge and glimmers of possibilities. We seek more participation by younger persons needed to replace elder supporters who are passing.

(3) Relating to Backus mission: The variety of these productions is meant to "celebrate the arts", a phrase directly from our mission statement. The after-concert discussions between audience and performers will enhance "life-long learning" also in our mission.

(4) Achieving proposed outcome: We hope that this wide variety, the enhanced outreach and the reduced ticket cost due to grant support will grow the Backus audience, our proposed outcome. In addition, it meets the criterion of MSAB: that "more MNs will have access...regardless of geographic location" as we are isolated, with an underserved population in many areas including the arts.

(5)Outreach: All four artists/groups offered supplementary programming reflecting prior success in other locations. Randy Noojin (Woody) employs both his educator and dramatist experience and training; we expect his message of social justice will move our older audience to remember and students to relate. A master class by Shaun Johnson will be a first-ever for local students; ten previous master class clients reflect Johnson's popularity and abilities. James Sewell Ballet resume shows collaboration with other top level groups (SP Chamber, VocalEssence, Cantus, Children's Theatre). Sewell's own works have been commissioned by professional groups. Ring of Kerry represents immigrant population through traditional music, often with a modern beat that we expect to interest youth. They are associated with the award-winning SP Irish Dancers. Extending, deepening and multiplying the arts experience beyond the building and the stage is the role of outreach here and we believe it will benefit both listeners and artists.

(6) Not otherwise available: Although our public library brings live performers here via the Arrowhead System, past arts sponsors (college, schools) have eliminated all such programs. Students being able to see and meet professional artists expands the possibilities! There are no singers as robust as those they will hear! Boys will see men dancing!

2. Commitment To and From the Community (3750 characters max)

This project proposal has firm commitment, and strong support, from area schools, residents, local artists, members of the business community and the center's board of directors. Each partner's commitment stems from a shared understanding that the performance arts series offers some residents of this remote region of the state an opportunity to learn first-hand from a variety of professional artists. For other residents, the series provides an artistic experience to an underserved population. Koochiching County area schools demonstrate their commitment by hosting the visiting artists on-site to educate, and perform, to youth ranging in ages kindergarten through high school. Distributing coupons to school participants that allow them to attend the evening concert free-of-charge if accompanied by a parent will extend this engagement.

Staff of International Falls' Good Samaritan Center demonstrates their organization's commitment to the performance series through a pledge to coordinate transportation of multiple senior and disabled residents to performances to experience art not otherwise available to them. Owner and manager of the local dance studio, Darcie's Dance, demonstrates support by hosting workshops that allow her dancers to experience the talent and instruction of the James Sewell Ballet Company. Backus Community Center's own theatre troupe, Borealis Bards, will coordinate efforts with Randy Noojin to offer acting training to its 30+ members as well as newcomers to the dramatic arts.

Planning and implementation efforts for this request involve a variety of individuals. Two Backus board members are excited to serve as co-authors and project administrators. One community member with extensive grant writing experience offered to assist with developing project goals, outcomes, evaluation and assessment. A local teacher will provide additional planning efforts by coordinating several school workshops for all of the area schools.

With the exception of the schools' and center's paid staff, partners and community members alike invest numerous hours to write the grant proposal and provide evaluation. Ushers, ticket sellers, light/sound technicians, and stagehands donate multiple hours to each performance to support the audience experience. In previous year's two additional grants from local foundations provided supplemental funding to the series. This funding will be requested again.

The location for the performance series serves as an excellent platform to reach those community members with accessibility needs. Located in the heart of International Falls, the Backus Community Center is centrally located for those without vehicles. An accessible entrance and elevator enable physically challenged individuals to easily access the performance area.

3. Project Administration (3750 characters max)

All activities will be overseen by Ward Merrill, Executive Director of Citizens for Backus/AB since 2008. In that time the annual budget has grown from \$140,000 to \$538,000 and over \$1.5 million in capital improvements have been made. He brings the experience of a 34-year teaching career with 18 of those as a community education director to the organization. The planning team includes Backus Arts & Programming Committee members Elizabeth Ward and Beth Lowthian. Elizabeth Ward holds a B.A. Degree in Art Education from Quincy University and a BFA Degree in Fine Art/Advertising. Previous experience in St. Louis, MO includes work as: an Art Specialist for New City School, an adjunct faculty Member of Washington University and board member of the South City Open Studio & Gallery. She also coordinates all Backus youth art programs. Beth Lowthian has 22 years experience with the National Park Service and is currently Business Mgr. for Voyageurs National Park. Beth is co-director of the "Borealis Bards" community theatre group and earned a B.A. Degree from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay with a Major in French and Minor in Humanistic Studies. Myrna Meadows, former Non-Profit Resource Specialist for the Otto Bremer Foundation will assist with developing project goals & outcomes. She brings a wealth of non-profit experience to the project and will serve as consultant for evaluation and assessment. Tamara Koenig, Int'l. Falls High School Vocal Music instructor will coordinate master classes and school outreach programs with the Falls, Littlefork and Indus schools. Tammy Crawford-Braaten Director of Admissions and Household Life at Falls Good Samaritan Center will coordinate outreach programs and transportation of residents. Dance studio director Darcie Schulz will coordinate ballet and Celtic dance workshops for local dancers and Brad Krassaway, Director of Student Life at Rainy River Community College will coordinate outreach programs and student volunteers at the college. Two Backus staff Hoa Sobczynski, Business Mgr. and Robin Bjorkquist, Event Coordinator will manage financial aspects/publicity/marketing for the project. Backus will engage our regular volunteers who will serve as front of house staff, assist with promotion, pre-concert dinners/intermission, tend bar and assist with sound/lighting.

Broad community participation will be secured by widely promoting all outreach programs/performances via website, social media, posters, radio, public access TV and use of "table tents" at local restaurants. Discounted season tickets will be offered to Backus members, pre-concert dinners will be held, a special "season ticket holder lounge" will be offered with complimentary beverages/snacks and season ticket holders will receive two free tickets to bring in first-time concert goers. A special "members only night" will present free entertainment, beverages/snacks while promoting season ticket sales. A minimum of 100 comp tickets will be distributed for each event to local social service providers, group homes and Community Café.

The project budget includes all fees and expenses submitted by the artists. Travel and lodging costs are not deemed excessive due to the 300-mile distance from the Twin Cities. Methods for gaining broad community support include promoting school outreach programs and offering comp tickets to all students with a 50% discount ticket to parents attending with children. Community outreach programs will be offered at no charge and will include a Mind/Body workshop and SmArts school program by J.S. Ballet, and hootenanny with songs of Woody Guthrie. Matching funds and a large portion of earned income will be generated through concert series sponsors, season ticket sales, local grants, beverage sales, ticket sales and pre-concert dinners. At least 25% of project cash expenses will be raised and administrative costs will be limited to the financial record-keeping costs directly related to the project.

Timeline: April-July 2015: Review audience surveys, planning, identify prospective artists, contacts, grant writing

Nov-Dec 2015: performance/outreach program dates established

Jan-Mar 2016: detailed planning regarding evaluation/assessment tools. Partners' roles in process clearly identified/defined.

Apr 2016: All outreach activities finalized with partners (schools, nursing home, dance studio, college)

May-July 2016: sponsors secured for 2016-17 season, promotional materials developed

Aug 2016: season tickets on sale, members only night planning

Early Sept: kick off members' night

Sept. 2016: early April 2017 – Artists' performances, community outreach, evaluations

Apr-May 2017: final evaluation, assessment, reporting

4. Evaluation and Assessment (3750 characters max)

1. (a) The change in condition sought through this project is to increase the size of the Backus audience through outreach to youth and families. (b) The evaluation plan consists of three elements:
All **data previously collected** from program surveys, coding of tickets & other promotions collated; increased attendance by youth & young families as well as new audience members will be measured against this. A plan to revise the ticketing process so that details are more easily collected will be instituted.
Secondly, performers will be asked to **interact with the audience** for a moderated 15-minute period following the performance. There will be video and written documentation of participation and content.
Thirdly, there will be video and written observation of **response to the performers at one outreach location for each of the four**. A Backus facilitator will attend and direct this in collaboration with the artists. To ensure consistency, the same guidelines and questions will be used and Backus staff, volunteers and partners will receive appropriate training.
2. Qualitative and quantitative data collected by these three methods will show whether audience numbers have grown currently and the possibility for future growth based on key questions such as whether there is a change in attitude toward live performers and/or the place of art in the participant's life.
3. The project outcome, increase the size of the audience, will achieve the MSAB program outcome: More Minnesotans have access to high quality arts opportunities regardless of geographic location. Backus Community Center is the only organization providing live performing professionals in the community.
4. (a) Evaluation will be designed and led by Myrna Meadows. (b) Meadows worked with nonprofit organizations as the Bremer Nonprofit Resource Specialist for twelve years, providing guidance and workshops on strategic planning and resource development. She was a public relations professional for ten years following her graduation from the University of Minnesota with a B.A. in Journalism. Her experience with research and organizing information is deep and broad covering both financial and social data. (c) Backus staff and volunteers will be trained by Meadows in observation and the role of subjective data collection to gather consistent, useful data and ideas for future programming, marketing and audience growth. Other partners, school teachers, staff of Darcie's Dance Studio and the Borealis Bards will be briefed on goals and asked for input.
5. Each year's programming rests on feedback and popularity of the current year's efforts. For two years, we have used surveys inserted in programs to meet new demands and expand art offerings. Enhanced evaluation as outlined here will provide deeper insight into those same questions as well as introduce new users to Backus. All offerings, performances, youth arts, outreach programs and special events will be reviewed in the light of the data gathered.

Arts Board Request

Arts Board Request

\$41,185

Validate Financial Information

Verify that these four statements are true before marking this form complete. If any of these four statements are false, click Edit and make corrections.

1. *Difference is \$0.*
2. *Arts Board Request + Regional Arts Council Grant(s) is less than or equal to the maximum allowed.*
3. *Applicant Cash Match is greater than or equal to the minimum required.*
4. *Arts Board Request is within range.*

1. Difference

\$0

\$65,685

\$65,685

2. Arts Board Request + Regional Arts Council Percentage

74.63%

75% is the Maximum Arts Board + Regional Arts Council Funding.

3. Applicant Cash Match Percentage

25.37%

25% is the Minimum Applicant Cash Match.

4. Arts Board Request

\$41,185

Arts Board Request must be between \$10,000 and \$150,000.

Project Revenue*Provide an explanation in the text box for every line item with a dollar amount entered, or enter "N/A."***Project Earned Income**

\$6,000

Project Earned Income Percentage

10.87%

Projected admission income at \$1,500 from each event. 4 performances x \$1,500 = \$6,000

Applicant Cash or Other Income

\$8,000

14.5%

\$500 - applicant cash

\$5,000 - foundations to cover outreach

\$2,500 - sponsors of 2016-17 Performing Arts Series

Regional Arts Council Grant(s)

\$0

0%

N/A

Subtotal Other Income

\$14,000

25.37%

Arts Board Request

\$41,185

74.63%

Subtotal Project Revenue

\$55,185

100.0%

*In-kind means the value of goods and services donated to the project that would otherwise be paid for in cash. Artist compensation cannot be listed as in-kind contributions. The in-kind amount will be copied to the expense section of this form.***In-Kind**

\$10,500

Volunteers: (front of house, marketing, dinner, bar, intermission) 242 hrs/performance x 4 events = 968 hrs. x \$7.25 = \$7,000. Space rental 4 performances @ \$500/ea. = \$2,000, 6 classes/workshops/programs @ \$250 = \$1,500. Total: \$10,500

Total Project Revenue

\$65,685

Project Expenses

Provide an explanation in the text box for every line item with a dollar amount entered, or enter "N/A."

Artist Compensation

\$34,500

Artist Compensation Percentage

52.52%

JSB: 10 dancers @ \$675/dancer per wk. for prep, rehearsal, outreach & performance = \$6,750. 1 artistic director @ \$1,650/wk. = \$1,650. TOTAL: \$8,400. Shaun Johnson BBE: 8 artists @ \$700/ea. = \$5,600 for performance, 8 artists + tech @ \$2,000/day for 2 days outreach = \$4,000. TOTAL: \$9,600. Randy Noojin: 1 artist @ \$1,500/performance, 1 artist @ \$500/event for: workshops/outreach/educ. programs x 10 programs = \$5,000. TOTAL: \$6,500. Ring of Kerry: 5 artists @ \$5,000 for performance, 6 dancers @ \$1,500 for performance. 5 artists @ \$1,250/day for 2 days residency = \$2,500. 6 dancers @ \$500/day for two days = \$1,000. TOTAL: \$10,000

Other Project Personnel

\$2,351

Other Project Personnel Expenses

3.58%

JSB: 1 operations mgr for 1 wk @ \$926, 1 production mgr for ½ wk @ \$375 = TOTAL: \$1,301. Shaun Johnson BBE: 1 tech included in total cost (see Artist Comp.). Randy Noojin: 1 tech support to run projections during performance & outreach @ \$50 event x 5 events = TOTAL: \$250. Ring of Kerry: -0-. Backus sound/Light tech staff: \$200/performance x 4 = \$800.

Travel

\$9,989

Travel Percentage	15.21%
	<p>JSB: 3 vehicles x 558 RT = 1,674 mi. x .56 = \$938, per diem: 12 artists x 4 days x \$42/day = \$2,016, 7 rooms x \$80/rm = \$560 x 3 nights = \$1,680.</p> <p>TOTAL: \$4,684. Shaun Johnson BBE: 5 DB rooms x \$80/room x 3 nights = TOTAL: \$1,200. Randy Noojin: \$800 R/T airfare New York to International Falls, mileage for outreach -150 mi X .56 = \$84, Lodging (motel/guest room) @ \$65/night x 8 nights = \$520, per diem - \$35/day x 8 days = \$280.</p> <p>TOTAL: \$1,684. Ring of Kerry: 2 vehicles (band) R/T St. Cloud to Intl. Falls = 996 miles, 2 vehicles (dancers) R/T St. Paul to Intl. Falls = 1,168 miles. 2,164 total miles x .56 = \$1,211, 6 rooms @ \$70 night x 3 nights = \$1,260. TOTAL: \$2,471</p>
Space	\$0
Space Expenses Percentage	0%
	N/A
Materials and Supplies	\$1,500
Materials Percentage	2.28%
	<p>Printing, copies for 4 performances @ \$300/event, Performing Arts Series promotion @ \$300. Total: \$1,500</p>
Promotion and Marketing	\$2,500
Marketing Percentage	3.81%
	<p>Cover newsletters, radio and media promotion. \$500/performance and \$500 for Performing Arts Series. Total \$2,500</p>
Planning and Evaluation	\$1,050
Planning and Evaluation Expenses Percentage	1.6%

Consultant fees:

To attend after-concert inter-action with audience: 4 @ 4100/each

To company each artist to outreach events: 4 @ \$100/each.

To design survey/observation materials and train staff/volunteers: \$250

If purchasing equipment, the total amount requested must be less than \$5,000.

Equipment Purchase \$0

Equipment Expense Percentage 0%

N/A

Equipment Rental \$800

Equipment Rental Percentage 1.22%

Rent video/camera for eight events to record outreach and performances. 8 @ \$100/each.

In-kind expense will be filled in automatically with the value the applicant entered into the in-kind revenue field.

In-Kind \$10,500

In-Kind Expense Percentage 15.99%

Other \$495

Other Expenses Percentage 0.75%

Hospitality for all artists and performers. JSB: 11 artists: \$165. Shaun Johnson BBE 8 artists: \$135. Randy Noojin: \$30. Ring of Kerry: 11 artists: \$165.

Administration \$2,000

Administrative Expenses Percentage 3.04%

Accounting and Bookkeeping: 100 hrs. @ \$20/hr.

Total Project Expenses \$65,685

Expenses Total Percentage 100.0%